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FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5119
INFO RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0546
RUEHVT/AMEMBASSY VALLETTA 0431
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0021
RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUEHBM/AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST 0003
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI 5659

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TRIPOLI 000637

NOFORN
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/MAG, PRM/A (SHEINLEIN), DRL/NEASA (CHARRIS)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 7/28/2019

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SUBJECT: UN OFFICIAL SAYS LIBYA, ITALY SHIRKING HUMAN RIGHTS RESPONSIBILITIES REF: A. TRIPOLI 579 B. 08 STATE 112873 C. TRIPOLI 273 TRIPOLI 000

1.(C) Summary: The top UNHCR official in Tripoli voiced concern that Italian-Libyan cooperation to return migrants interdicted in the Mediterranean Sea. UNHCR: REFUGEE CRISIS AS SOURCE OF RIGHTS VIOLATIONS FROM ITALY, LIBYA

2.(C//NF) In a July 28 meeting with Pol/Econ chief and Poloff, UNHCR Chief of Mission Mohammed al-Wash complained that Italy was breaking its commitment to return migrants.

3.(C//NF) The migrants were eventually delivered to an oil platform (operated by ENI) off the coast of Libya on or around July 2, from which they were being transported to Italy.

4.(C//NF) Al-Wash alleged that the Italian government was intentionally stonewalling the UN. According to al-Wash, Italian Ambassador Francesco Saverio Romano refused to provide details on the situation. REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT: UNHCR PLANNING FOR IN-COUNTRY PROCESSING

5.(C) Al-Wash reported that the Tripoli office was shifting its focus to beginning refugee resettlement to the U.S. via the standard processing channels.

6.(C) Al-Wash noted, however, that the change in tack would not be without challenges. He highlighted that there were no official interpreters available in Tripoli.

7.(C) On a more positive note, al-Wash said several Eritrean refugees slated for resettlement in the U.S. had been released from detention in Libya.

8.(C//NF) Comment: Stemming the flow of migrants to Italy was a key component of the Italian-Libyan "Friendship Treaty" signed last August. In the past, Italy has been a major destination for migrants from Libya.